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Ron Johnson report reveals FDA officials knew of COVID vaccine dangers in 2021

06/19/2026 // Cassie B. // **540** Views

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- Sen. Ron Johnson's report alleges FDA and CDC officials knew as early as March 2021 that vaccine safety monitoring was failing but suppressed data and silenced the researcher who discovered the flaw.

- Dr. Ana Szarfman identified a critical flaw called masking in the VAERS system and proposed an improved method that uncovered 25 previously undetected safety signals, including sudden cardiac death.

- FDA officials ordered Szarfman to cease her data-mining work and gradually cut off weekly VAERS reports shared with CDC to protect the vaccine rollout and secure full licensure.

- VAERS now shows over 1.6 million adverse events and 39,099 deaths associated with COVID-19 injections, with 9,332 deaths occurring within two days of injection.

- Major media outlets including the *Wall Street Journal*, *New York Times*, and *Fox Digital* refused to publish Johnson's op-ed on the findings, which he calls the biggest government scandal of his lifetime.

Sen. Ron Johnson, chairman of the Senate Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations, recently released a report titled "Unmasked: How Biden Health Officials Purposely Turned a Blind Eye Toward COVID-19 Vaccine Safety Signals." The findings, drawn from 11 million pages of internal documents obtained through the subcommittee's oversight efforts, allege

that FDA and CDC officials knew as early as March 2021 that the government's primary vaccine safety surveillance system was failing to detect serious adverse events. Instead of fixing it, they suppressed the data and silenced the researcher who found the problem.

The hidden signals that should have triggered alarms

In March 2021, Dr. Ana Szarfman, a senior medical officer and safety data-mining expert at the FDA, informed leadership that the agency's standard algorithm for analyzing the Vaccine Adverse Event Reporting System (VAERS) had a critical flaw called "masking." This occurs when a flood of reports for one product artificially raises the statistical baseline, making it harder for real safety signals to break through.

Szarfman proposed using an improved method called the Regression-Adjusted Gamma Poisson Shrinker, or RGPS, which she described as a "state of the art" alternative designed to correct this exact problem. The new method worked. Within weeks, she uncovered 49 examples of "extreme masking" and identified roughly 25 previously undetected safety signals, including sudden cardiac death, pulmonary infarction, and Bell's palsy.

According to Dr. David Wiseman, who testified at the hearing, "Masking occurs when statistical signals for one vaccine in a database are obscured by reports associated with other vaccines. For example, Moderna's myocarditis signal becomes hidden if its comparison baseline is artificially inflated by including Pfizer's myocarditis reports."

The order to cease and desist

Rather than adopt the improved system, FDA officials shut it down. Internal communications obtained by the subcommittee show that Dr. Peter Marks, director of the FDA's Center for Biologics Evaluation and Research, warned that Szarfman's data-mining work could "create erroneous conflicts that feed into anti-vaccination rhetoric." Within months, Szarfman was formally instructed to "cease and desist" her work using the RGPS method.

The FDA also began restricting its own internal reporting. Weekly VAERS data-mining reports that had been shared with the CDC were gradually reduced and then cut off entirely by July 2022. Internal emails show that FOIA concerns played a role in this decision, with one CDC official writing, "I think that because of the FOIAs we may have asked FDA to stop sending these weekly data mining outputs."

Johnson's documents show that officials prioritized protecting the vaccine rollout over informing the public. Securing full licensure was the priority as it would give President Biden the legal authority to mandate the shots for military personnel and millions of civilians.

The human cost of suppressed data

The consequences, Johnson argues, were catastrophic. VAERS now shows 1,676,100 cumulative worldwide adverse events and 39,099 deaths associated with the COVID-19 injection, with 9,332 of those deaths occurring within two days of injection — figures that accumulated long after officials had reason to sound the alarm.

Dr. Karl Jablonowski, who testified at the hearing, said: "Simply put, during the largest pharmaceutical roll out in history, pharmacovigilance did not exist. That is the betrayal of our time, so vast that we cannot even count casualties."

The suppression extended beyond data analysis. In March 2021, Dr. Avindra Nath of the National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke began treating patients with serious COVID-19 injection injuries. Twenty-three study participants were diagnosed and treated, then told to "not talk about the study." One participant later said the NIH scientists had "taken the data and left us hanging." It was not until those participants went public in 2022 that the NIH quietly posted its findings to a preprint server that almost no one saw, leaving physicians without guidance and injured patients without answers.

Media blackout adds insult to injury

Johnson has called this the biggest government scandal of his lifetime, and the media's response has largely confirmed his point. After major outlets including *The Wall Street Journal*, *The New York Times*, *The Washington Post*, *USA Today*, and *Fox Digital* declined to publish his op-ed on the findings, Johnson posted it himself on X. NBC, ABC, PBS, CNN, and MSNow have also refused to cover the report.

The technology to detect these dangers existed. The tools were tested, validated, and shown to work — and then deliberately set aside. As Jablonowski testified: "Had they actually turned out to be safe, it would have been serendipitous. A happy accident." For the Americans left injured, disabled, or grieving, it was anything but.

Sources for this article include:

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DailyCaller.com

PublicHealthPolicyJournal.com

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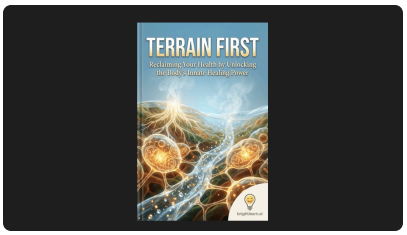

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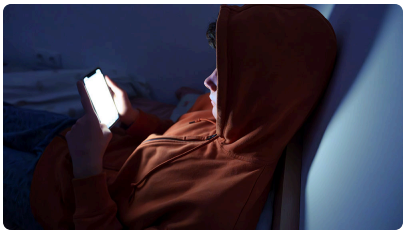

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